

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1: (Currently Amended): A method for providing an interconnection relationship between a product that has disposed thereon a machine readable product code on the product, and a desired location on a global communications network, the machine readable product code having encoded product code information contained therein and the purpose thereof [[not]] being other than routing to the desired location on the network, the product code information having no routing information embedded therein which would allow the product code information, in and of itself, to cause routing to the desired location over any path on the network, comprising the steps of:

reading ~~the machine~~ a machine readable code at a user location on the network;

in response to the step of reading the machine readable product code, and without user intervention of a user at the user location on the network, extracting the product code information from the machine readable product code;

assembling a message packet containing the product code information;

transmitting the message packet to an intermediate node on the network having associated therewith a database which has stored therein relationships between the product code information and routing information for at least one desired location on the network;

in accordance with the stored relationships in the database, converting the received product code information to routing information over the network to the at least one desired location associated therewith in the database, which routing information, associated with an instructional code, is returned to the user location and defines the manner by which a user or a computer at a user location wherein the machine readable code was read can communicate with the at least one desired location via an interconnection therewith;

receiving at the user location from the intermediate node on the network the routing information and associated instructional code that instructs the user node to connect to the at least one desired location on the network; and

connecting the user location to the at least one desired location in accordance with the

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received instructional code and associated routing information such that connection to the at least one desired location is controlled by the intermediate node through the instructional code, wherein all connections to desired locations are controlled only by the intermediate node and not by any actions at the user location other than the operation of reading, and wherein actions at the user location do not prevent connection or affect connection to the desired location.

Claim 2: (Original): The method of Claim 1, wherein the product code comprises a UPC.

Claim 3: (Original): The method of Claim 1, wherein the product code comprises an ISBN.

Claim 4: (Original): The method of Claim 1, wherein the product code comprises an EAN.

Claim 5: (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the routing information comprises a universal resource locator (URL) that comprises a unique locator on the network to the at least one desired location.

Claim 6: (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of converting comprises:

providing the database having stored therein an associative table which relates a plurality of product code information with associated desired locations on the network, each of the product code information having routing information to that associated desired location associated therewith; and

comparing the extracted product code information with the associative table in the database to determine the routing information to the at least one desired location.

Claim 7: (Canceled).

Claim 8: (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of reading comprises scanning of the machine readable code with a bar code scanner and wherein the machine readable code comprises a bar code.

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Claim 9: (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of extracting comprises the step of decoding the machine readable code to extract the product code information therefrom.

Claim 10: (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 9, wherein the machine readable product code comprises a bar code having the product code information encoded therein in a plurality of lines of varying width, each associated with machine readable codes, and the step of decoding is operable to extract the machine readable code from the lines during the step of reading, which step of reading comprises scanning the bar code with an optical bar code scanner.

Claim 11: (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of assembling the message packet comprises forming a data transmission that is comprised of a first field having associated therewith source information as to the location on the network of the user location, as second field having associated therewith destination information as to the location of the intermediate node on the network and a third and data field having associated therewith the product code information.

Claim 12: (Currently Amended): A method for providing an interconnection relationship between a product that has disposed thereon a machine readable product code on the product, and a target location on a global communications network, the machine readable product code having encoded product code information contained therein, the product code information having no routing information embedded therein and the purpose thereof being other than routing to the target location on the network which would allow the product code information, in and of itself, to cause routing to the target location over any path on the network, comprising the steps of:

reading ~~the machine~~ a machine readable code at a user location on the network;

in response to the step of reading the machine readable product code, and without user intervention of a user at the user location on the network, extracting the product code information from the machine readable product code;

assembling a message packet containing the product code information;

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transmitting the message packet to an intermediate node on the network in accordance with intermediate node routing information at the user location on the network;

15 the intermediate node having associated therewith a database which has stored therein relationships between the product code information and target routing information for at least one target location on the network;

comparing the received product code information with the stored relationships in the database and, if there is a match, selecting the target routing information from the database associated with the matching relationship, which target routing information is then associated with an instructional code and returned to the user location, which instructional code defines the manner by which a user or a computer at a user location wherein the machine readable code was read will communicate with the at least one target location via an interconnection therewith;

20 receiving at the user location from the intermediate node on the network the target routing information and associated instructional code that instructs the user node to connect to the at least one target location on the network; and

connecting the user location to the at least one target location in accordance with the received instructional code and associated target routing information such that connection to the at least one target location is controlled by the intermediate node through the instructional code, wherein all connections to target locations are controlled only by the intermediate node and not by any actions at the user location other than the operation of reading, and wherein actions at the user location do not prevent connection or affect connection to the target location.

30 Claim 13: (Currently Amended): A method for providing an interconnection relationship between a product that has disposed thereon a machine readable product code on the product, and a target location on a global communications network, the machine readable product code having encoded product code information contained therein, the product code information having no routing information embedded therein and the purpose thereof [[not]] being other than routing to the target location on the network which would allow the product code information, in and of itself, to cause routing to the target location over any path on the network, comprising the steps of:

reading ~~the machine~~ a machine readable code at a user location on the network;

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in response to the step of reading the machine readable product code, and without user
10 intervention of a user at the user location on the network, extracting the product code information from
the machine readable product code;

assembling a message packet containing the product code information;

transmitting the message packet to an intermediate node on the network in accordance
with intermediate node routing information at the user location on the network, which intermediate node
15 has associated therewith a database which has stored therein relationships between the product code
information and target routing information for at least one target location on the network;

which intermediate node is operable to compare the received product code information
with the stored relationships in the database and, if there is a match, select the target routing information
from the database associated with the matching relationship, which target routing information is then
20 associated with an instructional code and returned to the user location, which instructional code defines
the manner by which a user or a computer at a user location wherein the machine readable code was read
will communicate with the at least one target location via an interconnection therewith;

receiving at the user location from the intermediate node on the network the target
routing information and associated instructional code that instructs the user node to connect to the at
25 least one target location on the network; and

connecting the user location to the at least one target location in accordance with the
received instructional code and associated target routing information such that connection to the at least
one target location is controlled by the intermediate node through the instructional code, wherein all
connections to target locations are controlled only by the intermediate node and not by any actions at
30 the user location other than the operation of reading, and wherein actions at the user location do not
prevent connection or affect connection to the target location.

Claim 14: (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 13, wherein the step of assembling the
message packet comprises forming a data transmission that is comprised of a first field having
associated therewith source information as to the location on the network of the user location, as second
field having associated therewith intermediate node routing information as to the location of the
5 intermediate node on the network and a third and data field having associated therewith the product code

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information.

Claim 15: (Previously Presented): The method of Claim 13, wherein the step of reading comprises scanning of the machine readable code with a bar code scanner and wherein the machine readable code comprises a bar code.

Claim 16: (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 13, wherein the step of extracting comprises the step of decoding the machine readable code to extract the product code information therefrom.

Claim 17: (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 16, wherein the machine readable product code comprises a bar code having the product code information encoded therein in a plurality of lines of varying width, each associated with machine readable codes, and the step of decoding is operable to extract the machine readable code from the lines during the step of reading, which step of reading comprises scanning the bar code with an optical bar code scanner.

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